

Remarks at Saint Simon's Island, Georgia
June 8, 2004

Thank you all very much for working at what you're doing. It's a great example of Federal, State, and local cooperation. I appreciate many of you taking time away from your families to make sure this event goes the way we want it to go, secure and peaceful. I know that you're working long hours, and I've come to thank you very much for what you're doing. It means a lot to me,

and it means a lot to the people whose lives you're protecting.

So I want to thank you very much, and I ask for God's blessings on you all and the country. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:32 p.m. at the Multi-Agency Command Center.

Remarks Following Discussions With Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom and an Exchange With Reporters at Sea Island, Georgia
June 9, 2004

President Bush. Mr. Prime Minister, thank you very much for your steadfast leadership, your clear vision, and your friendship.

Yesterday was a important day for the Iraqi people. The United Nations Security Council unanimously expressed the desire for Iraq to be free and peaceful, and I want to thank you for your leadership on that issue. It's really important for leaders to have allies that they can count on and rely on and who's got good judgment, and you do. Welcome to America.

Prime Minister Blair. Thanks. Well, thanks very much, Mr. President, and thank you for your help and support in getting the resolution through. I think it's been a really important time.

I think that the crucial thing now is that the people of Iraq know they've got the whole of the international community on side for Iraq as a stable and democratic country. And the terrorists and the fanatics and the extremists who are trying to stop this democracy happening know they've got the whole of the world against them, and that's the key thing.

President Bush. A couple of questions. Tom [Tom Raum, Associated Press].

NATO Involvement in Iraq/Iraqi Security Forces

Q. Mr. President and Mr. Prime Minister, do you think you can translate this momentum from yesterday's vote into getting more debt relief for Iraq? And also, what are you looking for now as a next step in terms of NATO involvement in the process?

President Bush. We discussed NATO—the NATO involvement over breakfast, and we believe NATO ought to be involved. We will work with our NATO friends to at least continue the role that now exists and hopefully expand it somewhat. There is going to be some constraints, obviously. A lot of NATO countries are not in a position to commit any more troops. We fully understand that. But I do think NATO ought to stay involved, and I think we have a good chance of getting that done.

Prime Minister Blair. I think that's right. And I think also the key next step in this is going to be for the new Iraqi government to sit down with the multinational force